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INFO RUEHZO/AFRICAN UNION COLLECTIVE  
RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY COLLECTIVE  
RUEHTN/AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN 7249  
RUEH DU/AMCONSUL DURBAN 1328  
RUEHJO/AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG 9610  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 002142

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [KDEM](#) [SF](#)  
SUBJECT: LEADING POLICY STRATEGIST WALKS AWAY FROM  
GOVERNMENT

Classified By: Political Counselor Walter N.S. Pflaumer for reasons 1.4  
(b) and (d).

¶1. (SBU) Joel Netshitenzhe, Director-General of Policy and Coordination Services (PCAS) in the South African Presidency, and the government's chief policy strategist, announced his resignation on October 19. Netshitenzhe had served in the post since 1994. There is speculation that he resigned because his role would be reduced following a reconfiguration of the Cabinet (see septel). Netshitenzhe was one of the few senior members remaining from the administrations of former Presidents Mandela and Mbeki. In his role as PCAS Director, he was tasked with helping Minister in the Presidency for National Planning Trevor Manuel with formulating policy. The Presidency issued a statement saying Netshitenzhe's resignation follows discussion and "mutual agreement" with Manuel.

¶2. (SBU) His resignation follows some highly critical comments he made against the ANC last week. On October 16, Netshitenzhe lambasted the ANC for trying to micromanage the government. He also claimed that government officials and public representatives are not respecting the people they serve. He stated, "The conduct of people who are in positions of authority is not good, they are not respecting the masses of South Africa who suffer from bureaucratic arrogance." He went on to accuse some ANC members of insisting that ANC officials must remain in positions even when evidence says a "real misdemeanor is perpetuated." (Note: Netshitenzhe was referring to instances where ANC leaders are found guilty of corruption but are still kept in their positions due to their political connections. End Note.) He also said he had information that some ANC leaders are fueling service delivery protests for their own purposes.

¶3. (C) Comment: Netshitenzhe's resignation may have been agreed upon by Manuel and others in the Zuma government, but his comments against the actions of some other ANC members illustrate the continuing rifts between the SAG and the ruling party on policy decisionmaking. Netshitenzhe was part of the Mbeki system of governing, where a small number of government officials had direct input into policy, often at the expense of the ruling party. His resignation will be seen by many observers as evidence that, under Zuma, the ANC National Executive Committee is reasserting its power to push its policy vision, at the expense of government administrators (and Netshitenzhe did not want to be a part of it). There are some, however, who think Manuel is still pursuing his efforts to reinvent how the Presidency formulates and implements policy through national planning, but think that effort no longer included Netshitenzhe's office. In any case, the PCAS office, which was the most prestigious and important SAG decision-making body under

Mbeki, no longer has a single member who served under Netshitenzhe during the previous administration. All of them have either been fired or resigned. End Comment.  
GIPS